



Water Quality NewsFlash

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San Diego County Municipal Permit – *Draft issued* – The San Diego Regional Board proposes to reissue the municipal storm water permit applicable to the county and cities within the county. This Board has been innovative in its approach to regulating municipal storm water and this permit may set a precedent for future permits. One major goal of the permit is an expansion of the watershed-based requirements. Other highlights of this draft:

- Specifies a “triad approach” with monitoring for water chemistry, toxicity and bioassessment. “Persistent exceedance” of water quality objectives requires high priority follow-up only when the bioassessment shows indications of biota alterations. The Permit Fact Sheet notes that the monitoring data documents persistent exceedances of Basin Plan water quality objectives for various pollutants (metals, fecal coliform bacteria, total suspended solids, etc.)
- For construction projects, requires implementing agencies to designate a maximum disturbed area to be open at any one time. The Fact Sheet references Caltrans standard specifications generally limiting exposed areas to 17 acres or potentially less in the rainy season.

At designated construction sites, the permit requires advanced treatment, defined as “using mechanical or chemical means to flocculate and remove suspended sediment...” The Board references similar requirements in the Central Valley. (*Note: this permit regulates construction via the co-permittees who have responsibility to oversee construction projects within their jurisdictions; in addition, builders need to comply with the Construction General Permit under the dual regulatory system applicable to construction activities*).

- Places restrictions on infiltration of urban runoff in order to protect the groundwater including requiring pretreatment such as sedimentation or filtration prior to infiltration; establishing a minimum vertical distance to groundwater of 10 feet (some exceptions), and prohibiting infiltration for areas subject to high vehicular traffic (25,000 or greater average daily traffic on main roadways or 15,000 ADT on intersecting roadways).
- Requires that treatment control BMPs for specified project categories have a removal efficiency rating that is higher than “low removal efficiency”; some exceptions allowed.
- Allows a waiver of treatment BMPs and a transfer of the cost savings to a fund for projects elsewhere within the same watershed.
- Establishes a maintenance tracking system and also requires a Program Effectiveness Assessment
- Requires development and implementation of a Hydromodification Management Plan to address increases in peak runoff and volume from new projects. (See *NewsFlash 04-48*.)

Comments are due June 14, which is also the date of the public hearing. Posted at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/programs/sd_stormwater.html

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